

refuses to permit the kind of international inspections that could establish whether Iran's nuclear program is only for peaceful purposes. After Iran was offered the option of sending its enriched uranium to Russia and France for refinement into fuel rods for its research reactor, he responded by stalling with one contradictory counteroffer after another, all the while continuing to enrich increasing amounts of uranium to the point when Iran now is believed to have enough to build two nuclear bombs.

Mr. President, I want to commend Secretary of State Clinton for her measured, strong statements at the United Nations about Iran's duplicitous, dangerous flaunting of the international nuclear control regime. It does not appear that anything short of sweeping, multilateral sanctions has a chance of convincing Iran's leaders to change their reckless course.

It is tragic that Iran, a country of such talented, sophisticated people—many of whom risked their lives to protest a blatantly fraudulent election and who want peaceful relations with the United States—currently has a President who is squandering Iran's resources and reputation in pursuit of a narcissistic, foolhardy quest for a nuclear bomb that will only increase his country's isolation and intensify Iran's confrontational relationship with its neighbors and the international community. The potential consequences could not be more frightening for ordinary people everywhere, including the people of Iran, and the Security Council should delay no further in imposing the strongest possible sanctions.

MILITARY FAMILIES APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in Oregon, we just honored the return of 2,700 members of the Oregon National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team. Although the 41st's service in Iraq was Oregon's biggest single contribution to a war effort since World War II, it is not the only one.

The soldiers of the Oregon National Guard's 162nd Engineer Company are currently clearing roads in Afghanistan. The 1249 Engineer Battalion in Salem, OR, is preparing to deploy to Afghanistan this winter, and about 600 soldiers from Eastern Oregon will be part of the 116th Cavalry when it deploys to Iraq this fall.

I know I will return to the floor of the Senate to talk about the bravery and service of these men and women. But today I want to talk about the often unrecognized other half of these deployments—the military families that support the service members and keep things together at home. The spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents and community supporters who work together and toil alone to pay the bills, get the kids to school, and help find employment while their loved ones are away.

May 8 is Military Families Appreciation Day in Oregon. On this special day, our State honors the dedication and service of military families and veterans who have helped make America's military the strongest the world has ever seen.

Being left behind when a loved one goes to war is not an easy mission. Yet our military families continue to make the difficult sacrifices, and call upon their inner reserves, to nurture family life so that their service member can focus on the business at hand.

Our military spouses are the glue that holds our military families together. They unselfishly give up their husband or wife, their partner and friend to help serve our Nation. They celebrate important events like birthdays, anniversaries, and sometimes a child's first step or first word alone. They assume the difficult role of being both mother and father—shouldering the responsibility of creating and nurturing a loving family environment when their loved one is away. Their strength and determination are examples to the rest of the country.

And to all of the grandparents and friends who step up when our single-parent service members are called to duty, I thank you. You unselfishly answer the Nation's call by caring for our future generation. You help relieve the pressures of military service by making sure our service members' children are safe, happy, and loved. Stand tall, stand proud. You, too, are our unsung heroes.

Finally, I would like to recognize the sons and daughters who grow up in a military family. As the children of America's defenders, they cope with unbelievable circumstances. The smells of shoe polish, starch, and Brasso may remind them of home more than the smells of cookies and apple pie. Their mothers and fathers are called to duty at a moment's notice, and they have no choice but to be strong, even when it hurts to say goodbye. Their contribution to the Nation and personal strength does not go unnoticed. They are our future and represent the best America has to offer.

Today's military family—spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents and community—inspire us through spirit and strength. They proudly wave flags and keep the candles burning as a reminder of those who are gone.

Their dedication reminds us all that the U.S. flag is brilliant indeed; patriotic songs are not just reserved for the fourth of July; that a parting kiss can hold for months; and that shared tears can somehow bring us closer together. They put their own priorities aside. They take care of one another. They take care of America.

So to all military families, I thank you. Thank you for your service to your family, our community, and to our Nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CYNTHIA L. MUNSCH

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to honor a North Dakota woman retiring from a long and honorable career dedicated to assisting U.S. military veterans throughout Burleigh County in the State of North Dakota.

Cindy Munsch, of rural New Salem, ND, started her professional career as a teacher, educating young people on the Standing Rock Reservation, in the Bismarck Public Schools, and at United Tribes Technical College.

In 1985, after 14 years in education, Cindy commenced employment with the Burleigh County Veterans Service Office. Initially the office secretary, Cindy's outstanding work ethic and duty performance was recognized by the Burleigh County Commission with promotion to the position of Deputy County Service Officer. She is now retiring after 25 years of service to our veterans.

Cindy has assisted thousands of veterans with obtaining needed benefits and services. She is recognized by her peers across the State as an expert in veterans benefits, and she frequently provides advice and counsel at the request of other veterans service providers. She also assists in the administration of the veterans transportation program, which provides van transport to veterans from western and central North Dakota to the VA Regional Medical Center in Fargo.

Seeing a need for women veterans in the area to have the opportunity to address issues and experiences unique to their gender, in conjunction with staff from the Bismarck Vet Center, Cindy started a Women Veterans Group that meets monthly for the purpose of discussion and support, education and community service projects. In addition, Cindy cochaired the inaugural Women Veterans Summit, held recently in Bismarck, to bring women veterans issues into focus and to provide a networking opportunity for women veterans from throughout the State.

There is no more admirable vocation than one of service to others. Cindy Munsch dedicated her professional career to ensuring that our service members, who stepped forward to serve the Nation by preserving our freedom and way of life, receive the benefits and assistance they deserve. I am honored to salute Cindy Munsch for her dedicated and selfless service to our veterans for the past 25 years and to congratulate her on her retirement from the Burleigh County Veterans Service Office. •

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOSEPH W. BASCUAS

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to thank Dr. Joseph W. Bascuas for his invaluable contributions as interim president to Becker College and